between males, for a woman does not offer the threat of a rival to her male superior. Difference of sex, however, makes this relationship even more formal than that between men. Women do not appear frequently in the presence of their mothers' brothers. They occupy separate wings of the house, and intercourse between the sexes is severely restricted. Toward older brothers a woman's relationship is restricted almost to the point of avoidance. If she commits a misdemeanor, especially a sexual one, a woman immediately fears men senior to her in the *taravād*. Formerly, she might be executed by her brothers if she had sexual relations with a lower caste man. In an orthodox household today, a girl who becomes pregnant by a low caste man will be either expelled from the house by her male seniors or, at best, will be thrashed and will receive much subsequent harsh treatment.

It may be wondered why, since women are excluded from legal authority and from participation in the cult, ancestresses are believed capable of harming *taravād* members. The explanation of this, too, seems to lie in the content of relationships with the mother and other natal kinswomen. Women have no legal authority over their juniors. Indeed, the mother of a *kāranavan* is herself under his jurisdiction. Women do, however, exercise great moral authority over their children throughout their lives. In Cochin with duolocal residence, the care of children under about the age of five is almost entirely in the hands of women in a traditional *taravād*. Their fathers have no rights over them, the *kāranavan* is too remote a figure to concern himself with details of child training, and junior men of the *taravād* are often absent from home. A mother commonly treats her small children with indulgence, but is necessarily also the source of many frustrations, while the maternal grandmother and women of her generation are strict disciplinarians.

In Kottayam, where residence was traditionally avunculocal, children were frequently brought up in the *taravād* of the father. In such households today, the child has an intimate, affectionate relationship with his father who undertakes a part of his personal care. When the father's *kāranavan* is also the mother's father (as fairly often occurs with cross-cousin marriage), he and his wife treat the child with indulgence. Otherwise, they tend to have only a slight relationship with him and may even resent his claim to temporary hospitality in their house. The mother is, in these circumstances, again the child's chief mentor and disciplinarian, and he learns very early that his mother's brothers, though living elsewhere, are the real authorities whom he must respect and to whom he will return at adolescence, as their heir. In both areas the reverence acquired for the mother is perpetuated throughout life. Her wishes and those of his elder sister take precedence over those of a man's wife, to whom he has a very subsidiary attachment. The relationship with the mother is clearly characterized by great depth of emotion and by greater tenderness than that toward male seniors. Even so, it appears that in this relationship too, the emotion is usually consciously ambivalent. I illustrate this statement briefly with reference to the relationship between only one man and his mother, but it is characteristic of many. This Cochin Nāyar, aged thirty-five, visited us stealthily in the evenings and kept his visits from his mother, telling her he had business in the town. He was afraid she would become jealous, and angry with him for eating Christian food. She watched over him, upbraiding him when he spent much time in the house of his wife and children. He took care to be prompt for meals, and although he found her food inadequate he would not complain in case he appeared to slight her cookery. He had had a high

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar



school education and disbelieved in much traditional Nāyar ritual. Yet he once arranged for the performance of a sacrifice to a minor malevolent deity, Kuttichāttan, because his mother thought that this demon had killed their calf. On this occasion he complained that he found her control irksome, and wished he had younger brothers who would care for her and allow him to travel more. "I love *and* fear her," he said, "Sometimes I am angry with her." "But you don't say anything?" "Ah, no, nothing!" Far more than in most of the patrilineal castes of South India, therefore, a man's mother remains the supreme, if somewhat resented, moral authority. There is no wonder that after death a woman should be believed capable of punishing her children and grandchildren if they displease her.

Even so, ancestresses play only a minor part in the cult of forebears, subordinate, as in life, to the spirits of *kāranavans*. For the cult of lineage ghosts too closely resembles everyday adult relationships in the *taravād* for women to be accorded a paramount place within it. In religion, the supreme moral authority of the mother finds its expression rather in the cult of the goddess Bhagavadi. Bhagavadi is lifted above the sphere of kinship relationships, yet as patron of the *taravād* and the village she is stated to be the supernatural counterpart of the mother. Her attributes are more awesome and archaic than are those of ancestresses, and it seems probable that in her are portrayed very early infantile fantasies of the mother, corresponding to those of the period when she was the only significant object in the child's world. She inspires devotion and tenderness but, in her aspect as Bhādrakāli, she is also a horrendous demon, having snakes for hair, talons for fingernails, fangs for teeth, brandishing weapons in her arms, and with her mouth dripping blood. Her oral aggression is emphasized, for she is a devourer of male demons who dare to oppose her power. Bhagavadi is the great deity of both men and women among Nāyars, but she is more concerned with men than with women. She is the goddess of war, she possesses men more frequently than women, and it is men who devote themselves intensively to her cult. Ancestresses, on the other hand, seem to be somewhat more likely to attack women than men. The different relationships of men and of women to their mothers may be relevant in this connection. For a woman, the relationship with the mother is less awesome, less inspiring, more intimate and realistic but also more irksome and rivalrous than for a man. A woman replaces her mother in the *taravād*, and as she grows up, rivalry, including sexual rivalry, is often apparent between them. Women retain the right to administer corporal punishment to their daughters until adolescence or marriage, whereas men earlier pass under the discipline of their mothers' brothers and appear to retain a more childlike image of the mother. Nuances in the cult of the ancestors and the great deities appear to reflect this differential relationship of men and women to the senior generation.

In Kottayam, with avunculocal residence, fathers traditionally had a protective and intimate relationship with their children. It might be expected that the father's ghost would figure in some way in the cult of ghosts. This is not the case. The cults are practically identical in Kottayam and Cochin, and although a woman and her immature children in Kottayam lived in the house of the woman's husband, the husband's lineage ghosts were not believed capable of affecting their welfare. This is apparently because, both in Kottayam and Cochin, the ancestor cult mirrors the legal structure and collective responsibility of the *taravād*, which are identical in the two areas. The father's ghost has no place among the lineage ghosts because,